



# NASW

National Association of Social Workers / Connecticut Chapter

2139 Silas Deane Highway  
Suite 205  
Rocky Hill, CT 06067  
(860) 257-8066

Shannon Perkins, LMSW, President  
Stephen Wanczyk- Karp, LMSW, Executive Director  
[info.naswct@socialworkers.org](mailto:info.naswct@socialworkers.org)

TESTIMONY SUPPORTING SB-284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM  
EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN  
MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS.

Human Services Committee

March 10, 2022

Presented By: Kathleen Callahan, MSW

Dear Honorable Chairpersons Moore and Abercrombie, Ranking Members Berthel and Case, Vice Chairs Lesser and Leeper, and all other distinguished Members of the Human Services Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Kathleen Callahan, a resident of Stratford, and the chair of the National Association of Social Workers Connecticut Chapter's Education and Legislative Action Network (NASW/CT ELAN). I am testifying on behalf of the chapter which represents almost 2,400 members. We call upon the Human Services Committee to vote favorably on SB-284.

NASW/CT believes that every Connecticut resident has the right to accessible, comprehensive health care. Our 2022 legislative agenda specifically promotes actions that advance Medicaid expansion within the state. Specifically, we continue to support full coverage for all income-eligible immigrants regardless of status.

We are making progress in our state. Expanding HUSKY programs to cover all income-eligible immigrants who are pregnant, postpartum, or under the age of 8 in 2021 was a huge step forward.

It is not enough.

All children and adults need health insurance to learn, work, and thrive. All residents of our state deserve access to health care.

Lack of coverage is a significant barrier to preventative care and early detection of serious health conditions. Insurance coverage facilitates access to care, prevents long-term chronic illness, and leads to a reliance on emergency care for conditions that often could have been prevented or managed in a lower-cost setting.

We have people helping to fund our HUSKY programs through their state and local tax contributions who remain unable to benefit even if they meet the income eligibility criteria. Health care is a human right and no person, regardless of immigration status,

should be denied or forced to pay costly treatment when they are eligible for our HUSKY program.

NASW/CT supports this expansion of Medicaid coverage for those between the ages 8 and 18 regardless of immigration status while continuing to advocate for full coverage for all. We ask the committee to vote favorably.

With respect and gratitude for your service and consideration,

Kathleen Callahan  
NASW/CT ELAN Chair  
Stratford, CT